

## REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 15, 2005. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 are presented for examination. Claims 2, 10, and 18 have been canceled, and their recitations incorporated into Claim 1, 9 and 17, respectively; this action is taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 3, 4, 11, 12, 19 and 20 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Claims 16, 8 and 24 have been amended as to matters of form only. No change in scope is either intended or believed effected by at least these latter changes. Claims 1, 9, and 17 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his indication that Claims 2, 10 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Claim 1, the base claim of Claim 2, has been rewritten to include the recitations of allowable Claim 2; Claim 9, the base claim of Claim 10, has been rewritten to include the recitations of allowable Claim 10; and Claim 17, the base claim of Claim 18, has been rewritten to include the recitations of allowable Claim 18. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 1, 9 and 17 are now in condition for allowance.

The Office Action entered rejections of Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,437,793 (Kaasila) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,438,656 (Valdes). Independent Claims 1, 9 and 17 are seen to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance.

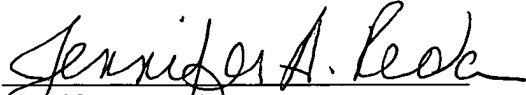
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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